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Drug dealers feel the pinch from new drug laws

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Territory police have served ten first notices on suspected drug premises in Darwin and three in Alice Springs, Police, Fire and Emergency Services Minister Syd Stirling told Parliament today.

Mr Stirling said the notices had been served as part of Operation Firefox, which was initiated by police to specifically target drug premises under new amendments to the Misuse of Drugs Act.

"There is a clear link between illicit drug use, particularly amphetamines, and crime in the community. These laws tackle our drug problem at the source – the dealers," Mr Stirling said.

"The new laws give police the power to execute search warrants and serve notices on suspected drug premises and have become an important tool in the fight against dealers operating out of these premises.

"So far, Operation Firefox has seen a total of 19 search warrants executed, resulting in five arrests, two summons and 30 infringement notices.

"One landlord evicted the drug dealers operating out of his premises after a third notice was served on him."

Mr Stirling said the success of Operation Firefox had made a mockery of the Opposition Leader’s claims that the Government had ‘invented’ the drug problem.

"The police obviously don’t believe the illicit drug trade is an ‘invention’ and I’m sure the people living next door to these drug houses don’t either," Mr Stirling said.

"Police will continue to gather intelligence on drug houses and the people operating them.

"They have extended Operation Firefox, which was due to finish in September, to the end of October. At the end of the operation, targeting drug houses will become part of the everyday duties of both uniform and plainclothes police.

"For too long, drug dealers have been allowed to flourish in the community – and sadly, the Opposition wants the Government and the police to turn a blind eye to their activities.

"With the help of the new laws and ongoing community support, police will continue to target drug dealing operations and shut them down for good."